

Juvenile Court Holds First Session In New Home Without Atmosphere

THE JUVENILE DELINQUENT HOME

Members of the Montgomery Federated Women's Clubs are to be commended for their efforts which led to the leasing of suitable quarters for the Juvenile Court and a detention home for juvenile delinquents.

A building at 216 South Court Street, which has been leased by the Board of Revenue for two years, will be remodeled to house the court for delinquent children and to detain children too young to be placed in prisons.

The first floor of the Court Street building will be used as a courtroom. Special quarters have been set aside for housing white and Negro children under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court.

A special committee from the Woman's Clubs, headed by Mrs. W. E. Benns and Mrs. Joseph Wagner, spent many months investigating the case of juvenile delinquents in Montgomery County and in bringing to the attention of the county officials the great need for a detention home for children.

The Montgomery Junior League has donated furniture from the Girl's Home, which is now closing.

A matron and a special police officer will be on duty at the home at all hours.

Boys and girls under 16 years of age, of course, never should have been placed in prisons with adult criminals. But despite attempts on the part of officials to guard youthful law-breakers from the unwholesome environment of county jails it has been necessary in the past to place too many boys under 16 in jails with run-of-the-mill criminals.

Not all of the youngsters who come under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court are possessed of criminal tendencies. Indeed, there are many unfortunate children who need the protection and the guidance of such a court and such a detention home, who can be developed into sturdy citizens.

Prisons not especially equipped to deal with children, in most cases merely further criminal careers for youngsters who, with proper guidance, could be made into useful, respectable men and women.

If the detention home should keep only one boy from an adult prison it would be well worth the efforts of the women who have made the home possible.

As it is, the juvenile home will save many boys from prisons.

Officers of the Juvenile Court, of Montgomery County, yesterday held their first session for whites in the new two-story home at 216 South Court Street. While not a new building, it has been reconditioned and is now regarded as one of the most ideal places of the kind in the South. The complete elimination of courtroom atmosphere, which had for years been the dream of officers of the court, has been accomplished since the institution was moved off Dexter Avenue.

Instead of having the juveniles brought from the county jail when their cases are to be heard by Judge Harvey M. Blue, presiding officer of the court, those that are confined are kept in the home. So far only one colored girl has had to be admitted.

Mrs. Susanne H. Lurton, chief probation officer, who was untiring in her efforts to secure a more modern environment for the youths, said the day for prison bars for juveniles was gone forever in this county. Instead of bars, the windows will be equipped with strong screens.

Sleeping quarters consist of two bed rooms for whites and two for colored children. The rooms in which they are to be retained are neat and well ventilated; the beds clean and comfortable. Mrs. Annie Bishop, matron in charge of the home, will see to it that wholesome food will be served at all times.

It was pointed out that the court has never had actually to lock up many of its juveniles, especially whites, and the two bed rooms, Mrs. Lurton asserts, will afford ample space for each race.

The large building, containing about 15 rooms and used for many years as a dwelling, includes a recreation hall, furnished with a piano, books, magazines, sofas, chairs, and other furniture. On the wall is a large picture of President Roosevelt, who has a deep interest in human welfare, especially children. There are three baths in the building. Judge Blue's courtroom is said to be a great improvement over the old place, and Mrs. Lurton has an attractive office on the first floor. Also on that floor are offices for Judge Blue, Thomas H. Watts, clerk of the court, and Lillian Dungee, deputy probation officer in charge of negro cases.

Mrs. Lurton, as proud of the home as if it belonged to her, explained that the Court of Domestic Relations does not undertake to provide a home there for neglected children. "This is only for delinquents and neglected youths are cared for at a boarding house on Fairview Avenue," she said. Mrs. Lurton revealed that since the new home was opened recently she has received a number of inquiries about accepting neglected children.

When the home is completely renovated and redecorated, the court will hold open house and invite the general public to

inspect the premises, Mrs. Lurton said. This will probably be arranged some time next month.

The home has been partially furnished by various women's organizations of the city. It is understood that the men's civic clubs, some of which have already asked for the privilege of aiding in equipping the institution, will be given an opportunity to make contributions later on. Mrs. Lurton and members of her board acknowledged gifts from the following organizations: City Commission, Board of Revenue, Junior League, Paramount and Pekin Theaters, Weaver Furniture Company, City Federation of Women's Clubs, sponsors of the home; Pandora Club, University Women, Child Study Club, Mother's Round Table, Mother's Circle, Jewish Women's Council, Fortnightly Study Club, and W. A. Webber Company, Inc.

To Mrs. Joseph Wagner and Mrs. W. E. Benns, members of the board, Mrs. Lurton expressed appreciation for services performed in securing the location and in getting the home opened. She also thanked Mose Stuart, another member of the board, and others for the interest manifested in the project. It was through the medium of the Federation of Women's Clubs that officials of the court were able to launch a movement several months ago that culminated in the recent opening of the juvenile home.

NEGROES PLAN DRIVE AGAINST DELINQUENCY

Increased Recreational Facilities For Juveniles Sought

Elimination of juvenile delinquency among negroes by increasing their recreational activities is announced as the object of a renewed campaign of negro employees of city park and recreation board.

L. Clarke, supervisor of park negro workers, who attended a Southeastern divisional meeting of negro park workers in Greenville, S. C., this week, said similar drives would be launched throughout the South.

Clarke was elected vice president of the Southeastern zone of the National Negro Recreational Assn. Birmingham has a larger staff of negro park workers than any other city in the South, Clarke reported.

The national convention of the association will be held in Cleveland, O., next year.

Juvenile Delinquency - 1934

MIAMI, FLA.
HERALD

MAY 7 - 1934

SOLVING A SOCIAL PROBLEM

ONE of the most serious social problems with which this county of Dade has to deal is, what can be done with reference to delinquent colored children?

The law has made some provision for the proper care of delinquent white children, but nothing has been done effectively to provide protection against the rising tide of delinquency among the underprivileged and badly envired colored boys and girls.

Under the law establishing the juvenile court for this county, that court has jurisdiction over all minors accused of crimes or misdemeanors.

In the cases concerning white boys and girls the court has no difficulty in enforcing discipline. There are state institutions to which white children over 12 years of age who need mild correction and a measure of instruction, may be sent for such terms as the judge may deem advisable. There is a county institution at Kendall to which children under 12 years of age may be cared for properly.

In the case of the negro boy 12 years of age there is a department of the Boys' Industrial school at Marianna to which the incipient criminal may be sent. But there is no such provision for the delinquent colored girl, either in the county or the state.

The court is practically powerless to secure reformation conditions for young colored people. The judge, earnestly trying to do something that will prevent crimes in the younger generation of negroes, finds his hands tied by the reason of the fact that no provision has been made for institutions where colored girls and children under 12 years of age may receive care and atten-

tion. All the presiding officer of the court can do with those classes of delinquents, petty or otherwise, is to turn them loose or parole them in the custody of their parents, which does not alter the situation in the least.

Judge W. H. Beckham of the juvenile court is endeavoring to arouse official and public sentiment in favor of a movement to impose conditions which are now well nigh intolerable.

He proposes that the court be provided with funds by which delinquent negro children may be sent to a private industrial school at a small fee, or that a suitable tract of farm land be secured and proper barracks be erected, where these children may be taught a trade and habits of industry and given proper schooling and character training.

Neither project would prove expensive, and either would prove a wise investment, for it takes much more money to take care of the criminal when he becomes a criminal than it does to educate and train him not to be a criminal.

Judge Beckham's proposition ought to receive encouraging support from the people of Dade county.

If Dillinger really wants to capitalize his ability to disappear, there is old Sam Insull still with a few hopeful doubloons.

HONORED BY GEORGIA SOCIAL CONFERENCE



FRANK CALLEN

Indicate
Frank Callen, probation officer of the Chatham County Juvenile Court, was elected to membership on the executive committee of the Georgia Conference of Social Work at the annual conference held at Macon, during April. It is a mark of high distinction to receive such recognition. Dr. Forrester B. Washington, director of the Atlanta Social Work and Prof. Hunt, president of Fort Valley Normal Institute, have each served terms on this committee in the order named.

Mr. Callen in point of service is said to be the senior of all probation officers in the state of Georgia, having been attached to the Juvenile Court here 17 years, except for absence in the army. The corrective system in our city and county although short of certain customary facilities; is in the foreground of the work being done in our state. The work of prevention, represented here by the Savannah Boys' Club, an organization

for the underprivileged boys, which now owns its building of 23 rooms with a membership upwards of 800 organized by Mr. Callen and of which he is the present executive officer; is an advance of any similar work not only in Georgia, but the entire South. Further recognition was given this work recently when City Council voted to give \$25 monthly toward the general maintenance of the Boys' Club.

The first meeting of the new executive committee was held in Atlanta on Tuesday of this week and was attended by Mr. Callen. Many state wide social problems were discussed and outlined to some extent and will form the basis of the program for the next conference to be held in the spring of 1935 at Columbus. Special efforts will be made to increase the interest of agencies working among colored people and have all of them take part, in some way, in the next conference.

Detention Home Assailed by Jury Is Termed 'Disgrace' by Visitor

By RALPH T. JONES.

The report of the Fulton county grand jury, made public Friday, draws attention to an institution that, by its condition and the use to which it is put, can be rightfully classed as the outstanding disgrace of Fulton county.

The juvenile detention home, on Central avenue, is a place barely fit for habitation by animals, yet in it are confined, behind locking bars, mere children, boys and girls who, often through no fault of their own, have come under the jurisdiction of the courts.

None of these unfortunate youngsters stay in the detention home long, a week or so being the longest for any of them. In a week, however, seeds that will create criminals of worse type in after years may be sown.

The youngsters are kept there either until their cases can be heard in juvenile court or until their parents or guardians can be found and means of providing proper homes for them arranged.

It is, basically, impossible to make a proper institution for such a purpose out of the building on Central avenue. Built immediately after the War Between the States, it is so old and decayed that the very bricks are crumbling, the plaster falls whenever there is a moderately hard shower and

caused by the inmates who cannot be prevented from breaking the panes.

Segregation System Faulty.

There are five dormitories, one for negro girls, one for negro boys and two for white boys. Thus the white boys are the only ones who enjoy any degree of separation of the incorrigibles from those merely unfortunate.

One side of the building doesn't boast a window and the toilets, which are all on this side, are dark and in musty closets. There is one shower room in the basement for white and colored boys, though it does boast five separate showers with flimsy wooden partitions between and the white boys use separate showers from the negroes.

The dormitories have old, rusty iron beds, with a thin and often moldy straw mattress on each. Over this is a piece of cotton sheeting, itself not too clean. The home has recently started washing its own linen, which is hung to dry on the rear porch. Formerly it was done at another county institution, but the superintendent of the home said that it was not satisfactorily cleaned.

All windows, not many in number, are covered with heavy iron mesh, and the doors have a slot at about the height of a man's head, about 18 inches wide and six inches deep. This is covered with two or three rusty iron bars.

Most of the windows have broken panes of glass, this, it is said, being caused by the inmates who cannot be prevented from breaking the panes.

Old-Fashioned Heating.

The place is heated with a small, old-fashioned boiler, though it was said that this supplies plenty of hot water.

The dining room for white inmates is in the basement, while the negroes are served in their dormitories. A soiled tablecloth covered one of the tables, when this visitor saw the place, with an uncovered pickle jar and molasses container in the center. A couple of flies were enjoying the molasses.

Formerly the dining room and kitchen were three or four inches deep in water with every hard rain, but this trouble has been reduced by the building of a two-foot retaining wall outside.

It is pitiful that young lives should ever be caged, like criminals or beasts, behind barred doors and windows. Pitiful, but in some cases, unavoidable.

It is ghastly that they should be put in such a place as the Fulton county detention home, no matter what they have done nor how hardened they may be at 12 or 16 years of age.

And it is more ghastly when it is known that some of the children kept in this place are merely being held as witnesses, or because they are homeless waifs and there is no other place for them.

Names Mrs. Mason To Membership On Board of Guardians

Judge Sullivan of the Juvenile court has just announced the appointment of Mrs. Carolina Mason as a member of the board of children's guardians.

Judge Sullivan stated that he felt that the colored people should have a representative on this board, and, decided to make such an appointment the first opportunity he had. The opportunity presented itself Wednesday with the expiration of the term of Mrs. A. Bremer of Crown Point. Mrs. Mason has lived in this city for the past twelve years and is the wife of Attorney Mason, a teacher in the public schools, a member of Stewart Settlement House and a substantial taxpayer. Mrs. Mason is held in very high regard in this city. 4-20-34

The other members of the board are Mr. W. J. Hamilton of Gary, Mr. Frank O'Rourke, president, Mrs. Mary Cowroy of Hammond, Mrs. Cora Eaton of Whiting and Mr. John Porter of East Chicago.

Judge Sullivan stated to a representative of the Gary American that it is his policy to keep this board up to the highest standard possible and in the selection of Mrs. Mason he has made no mistake. Mrs. Mason will take office today.

FILLING A GREAT NEED IN
THE SOUTH.

The Louisiana Legislature has just passed a law authorizing the construction and maintenance of a training school for Negro delinquent boys, with a \$25,000 appropriation for 1934 and \$30,000 for 1935. This act of the Louisiana legislature is to be heartily commended, inadequate and tardy though the appropriation be. Few Southern States have seen the necessity and justice of providing such institutions for wayward Negro youth. They have been satisfied to thrust them into prisons and road camps with vicious, hardened criminals, a prey to nameless lust, eager disciples of yeggs, murderers, perverts and thieves.

Many more such institutions are sorely needed throughout the South and in some parts of the North. Where they do not exist the Negro community must take upon itself, upon its own heavily burdened shoulders, this heavy social load, which is growing heavier yearly. It is as much the duty of the State to supply such institutions as it is for it to supply educational institutions and protection from fire and flood.

Pittsburgh, Pa., Courier
July 14. 1934

Reefer mania has spread to N. Y. School Children

By AL WHITE

The dance hall is crowded. Every-
body is having a perfectly swell
time. Drinks are being passed
around. Cigarette smoke curls up-
ward in a blue haze. On the floor,
flashing femininity in gorgeous gowns
swirling around on the arms of hus-
ky men in somber black to the mad
wild music of some big name band.

Upstairs in the boxes, gay parties
with their light banter fill the up-
per reaches with snatches of laugh-
ter and song intermingled—when
the peculiar odor assails one's nos-
trils. Unlike anything else one has
ever smelled, the distinctive odor
sickens the person at first, but grows
on him later.

One's introduction, perhaps, to the
famous "reefers." In polite circles,
marihuana. In the gutter, "weeds."

Home is Mexico.

Its Harlem origin, like the num-
bers racket, is believed traceable to
the Latin element of the commun-
ity. Originally, marihuana, growing
wild in warm dry climates, is shun-
ned by the better class persons.
Peons love it, for it gives them for-
getfulness from the cares which be-
set them. This stamps its home as
Mexico and the countries adjacent
to Mexico.

Spreading northward, marihuana
is found in Texas and other states
of the great Southwest. The strange
little plant has many names, but it
first burst into stories as "coco
weed." And as "coco weed" it was
the bane of western cattlemen.

Sweeping Eastward, the marihu-
ana rage got to Harlem unnoticed
until the effects, kin to those of nar-
cotics, were discovered by the citi-
zens addicted to the use of those
stimulants.

Winston-Salem, N. C., Sentinel
April 13, 1934

Incorrigible Negro Girls Are Perennial Problem for Courts

GREENVILLE, N. C.
REFLECTOR

What can be done with incorrigible Negro girls in order that they may have the benefit of improved environment and in order that the community may be protected?

This is a question which has long puzzled Judge Wilson and the late Judge Watson, of municipal court, and has been a source of no little distress for city welfare officers and a harassed police department.

The matter has been given still another of the innumerable stirs within the last few days when a thirteen-year-old Negro girl stole a can of lard from a city market grocer and attacked the grocer with a switch-blade knife when the grocer apprehended her. She then became a problem for the entire executive and judicial end of the law.

Naturally, the young Negress went before the juvenile court. There was nothing that could be done which was lasting. It finally was agreed that the mother should administer punishment and that the girl should be enjoined regarding the seriousness of her crime.

The court and the officers of the law heaved a resigned sigh, because they knew the history of the young criminal. They recalled that she had long been the head of an organized group of young women criminals. For a time the group conducted a wholesale prostitution business. When this was broken up, four men were sent to the penitentiary for their connection with the revolting situation.

On another occasion, the girl had testified against and sent a Negro man to the penitentiary, the original charge she had brought against him being the first-degree crime of criminal assault.

It is freely admitted by police and other responsible officials that many such girls will stop short of no crime in the catalog for which their finesse is capable.

Unless these girls have reached the age of accountability under the law, there is no place of detention to which they can be taken—with one pitiful exception. Efland Detention Home, which is supported mainly by the Negro Federation Clubs, offers a haven for fourteen girls. In other words, officials have about one chance in ten thousand of effecting a placement in the institution.

Officials admit that the problem is one which is accepted as a matter of course; its proportions are too magnitudinous to be tackled lightly. As yet no possible solution of the problem appears on the horizon, officials reveal.

DEC 8 1934

Here is a record of which the white race of Pitt County should be ashamed, and about which something should be done. While our white population is only slightly above that of the negro race, the number of cases in our Juvenile Court over a period of four years shows that approximately twice as many white children have been before the court than have the negro children. Certainly with the advantages that the average white child has over the colored children the records indicate that the delinquency among our white children is far greater than among the negroes. This is a serious situation that confronts the white race of our county and is a challenge to all parents to strive at all times to do more nearly their duty in the way of proper training for their children.

Juvenile Delinquency

City Manager Orville Mosier has brought very forcibly to the attention of city, county and state government a problem in juvenile delinquency. The cross-currents springing from broken homes, a direct result of the current depression, has thrown upon the public a new menace in the form of the hitch-hiker, and later the petty thief graduating into the racketeer. Not alone is Mr. Mosier in this trend of thinking. We talked recently with an important official of this city who stated that the situation was acute. He alleged that fully 200 white boys in Oklahoma City had in the past four years developed into confirmed delinquency.

The federal government, with its CC Camps, did much to relieve this ugly situation several months ago, and while the noticeable reduction of hitch-hiking on the highways is easily attributable to this governmental function, there is much yet to be done before the aftermaths of the depression have been fully relieved.

While white people are thinking in these terms, it should not be overlooked that the same condition is developing among young Negro boys. Not so long ago a high-jacking occurred down in the southern part of the city. Several weeks later property belonging to the victim was found in a pawn shop and later traced to a young Negro boy. In jail at the present time is a young Negro boy charged with attempted hi-jackings during the past two weeks. Citizens complain of constant robberies in the Negro section, and in fact one Negro merchant had his life almost taken near the Scarborough school, and his wife's pocketbook snatched by individuals who, he states, were Negroes.

What we desire to say is that some effort should be made by Negroes along with the whites to work out some rehabilitation program which may prove effective. We do not believe the Negro citizens have been as persistent in their demands for CCC opportunities for Negro boys. It is the general information of everybody that few black boys in this state have been given advantage in this federal setup.

Again, it is patent that unless some special provisions are made, the plans proposed by Mr. Mosier will be worked out for white boys in its entirety. We suggest that a proposal be made that housing space at the Boys' Training School be doubled. The Boley institution has been filled to capacity for years. It appears that a fine piece of work could be done in the interest of Negro juveniles, and at a minimum cost to government, by doubling the dormitory capacity at the Boley school.

FLIGHT OF NEGRO DELINQUENTS

While citizens, committees and commissions are discussing the alarming crime wave enveloping the country and are trying to devise means and methods to combat successfully this increase in lawlessness and criminality, it strikes The Defender that a more sincere and earnest effort ought to be made at the source as a preventive rather than a curative measure.

In urban centers with large Negro population, according to authentic records, many of the colored criminals are young men and women, several of them barely out of their teens; and instances are frequent where colored juveniles are charged with committing many infractions against the social codes.

Something should and must be done to reduce criminality and waywardness among these youths of color, for the Negro race is being handicapped and disgraced by the shameful deeds of so many youngsters.

Colored girls, many of them still in their minority, can be seen roaming the streets at night "soliciting business" and the number engaged in this "street life" seems to be on the increase rather than the decrease.

When these colored youths run afoul of the law, there is no institution to which they can be committed (at least not in Houston or any other Texas city) where they can be corrected, trained and reformed to make good citizens; despite the fact that such homes or schools are financed and maintained for juvenile delinquents of other races, with some of such institutions being supported partly by tax payers of the community.

Juvenile delinquency in Houston and Harris County has attained alarming proportions, yet law-enforcing and administering agencies find themselves in a dilemma when it comes to placing these youthful violators of the law in an institution for delinquent and incorrigible youths.

With home life and parental supervision and control disintegrating and many of the paternal and maternal duties and obligations delegated or surrendered to social welfare organizations and police and constabulary forces, the Negro race, particularly in Houston, is producing a bumper crop of young criminals and social offenders who constantly are being haled into court for their misdeeds.

Dives and questionable resorts are crowded daily and nocturnally with young boys and girls, who mix and mingle freely and unrestrained with habitues several years their seniors, and by such baneful associations these youngsters are receiving a type of training which is reflected in the records of our criminal courts—corporation, county and district.

Here is a chance for a fine piece of home missionary work on the part of both Negroes and whites, who should unite their forces to establish and maintain institutions in this community where these youthful offenders can be committed and reclaimed as useful units of society.